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COMMENTS.

The names of candidates who have been nominated for the coming Council elections have been published. The total number of candidates runs to several hundreds and on an average, there are 4 candidates for every seat. We must assume that the boycott of Councils advocated by Mr. Gandhi has had little effect in this Presidency. It has succeeded to some extent in Bombay while it has made little headway in the United Provinces. It is true that a few eminent men have withdrawn in deference to the mandate of the Congress. In this Presidency, the boycott of Councils received no support from any prominent newspaper and *New India's* opposition to the Non-Co-operation movement had an educative value with a section of the people, which could not be counteracted but by a formidable rival. And there was none such in the field. Mr. Gandhi's followers are making great efforts to educate the voters to abstain from voting. It remains to be seen how far this will succeed. But as Mr. S. Srinivasa-Ayengar said, the experience of other countries is that nearly 50 per cent. of the voters do not go to the poll. In a country where business habits and civic sense have not adequately spread, people have only to be told not to go to the polling booth and they will gladly stay away. Leaving a fair percentage for such idlers, if the Non-Co-operationists can influence a large majority of the voters, then they will win. We shall wait and see.

* * * *

We heartily agree with the sentiments of Pundit Madan Mohan Malavia regarding the necessity of more education to train Indians for the furture administration, of their own country. We are relieved to hear that Benares will not follow the example of Aligarh and that wiser counsels have so far prevailed at the seat of the Hindu University. While recognising that it is a matter of religious faith with the Muhammadans, we still think that the young men of Aligarh have acted wrongly in throwing away their *alma mater* for the will o' the wisp of a National University. Political meetings in India derive their strength and seriousness largely because our young friends take lively part in them and from their tone and attitude nobody can say that the present system of education has done them irreparable harm. Their education in schools is supplemented by education at home and they are largely influenced by the speeches and examples of Indian leaders. At any rate, it is not a worse evil to continue to study in schools and colleges for some time more until the shaping of our educational policy is entirely in our hands than aimlessly to give it up. Education is the basis of politics and with the broadening of education will come a profounder realisation of all political problems. Gokhale, Tilak, Banerji, Lajpatrai and Gandhi who are among the makers of modern India were all educated under the present system. Schools and Colleges may afford a fertile soil for Non-Co-operation because to most young men there, the hard realities of life will not have become evident and their minds will be thirsting for some form of sacrifice, for some form of martyrdom. While we make an earnest appeal to Mr. Gandhi to refrain from interfering with the Colleges, where are being trained the future Statesmen, Politicians, Administrators, Ambassadors, Journalists and Warriors, may we also implore the youth of the land to resist any such temptation until they complete their educational course? And then will come their turn.

* * *

The first All-India Trade Union Congress which met at Bombay is an event of much importance. At a time when rumours are prevalent that the Capitalists desire to crush labour unions, an organisation such as this will do much good to the persecuted labourers. The Presidential address delivered by Lala Lajpat Rai was firm, clear and penetrating. It

revealed a breadth of outlook and a clear grasp of the difficulties which labour in the country has to surmount. He pleaded for more education and greater unity among them. The Congress passed several useful resolutions including one urging the authorities to prohibit the opening of drink shops at the vicinity of factories and labour centres.

* * *

Coming nearer home, we had the Conference of Postmen of this Presidency. The Postmen were fortunate in securing Mr. S. Srinivasa Aiyangar to preside over their Conference whose very acceptance of the Presidentship was an indication that the men have just causes of complaint. Mr. V. L. Sastri who was the Chairman of the Reception Committee delivered a feeling address in which he pointed out the hard lot of these Government servants and pleaded for greater increase in salaries and more privileges. With much of what he said, we heartily agree. Organisations such as these will be beneficial if the men carry on their work realising their own limitations and with a due sense of responsibility and loyalty to their leaders. We echo the following warning of Mr. Srinivasa Aiyangar that "Strike is a double-edged weapon which would cut both ways. Strikes must be resorted to only if absolutely necessary and as a last resource."

* * * *

The long resolutions passed by the Council of the National Federation of India do not come to us as a surprise. They represent the feeling of a party which attaches more importance to words and phrases than to principles. The worst crime of the moderate party in India is that it is trading upon other peoples' sacrifices. During the outbreak of the war, some leading lights of the moderate party proposed the suspension of the Congress sessions as a mark of loyalty to the Government. When Mrs. Besant vigorously organised her Home Rule propaganda, her greatest opponents were the moderates with whom she is dangling to-day and her greatest and most enthusiastic supporters were the large number of men whom she has alienated by her strong criticism. By the way, we might say that Mrs. Besant's great influence in Indian politics began to wane when she attempted to collaborate with a party which has nothing in common with her. The present Reform Act, whatever its defects, is the outcome of the strenuous work of the Nationalist party. When the proposals for Reform were published, the moderate leaders, who were hiding at the hour of sacrifice, emerged out of their hiding place in order to welcome the Reforms, having in view the prospective ministerships. The work is done by the nationalists, the fruit is reaped by the moderates because, they possess the qualities of statesmen! Our criticism may seem strong and bitter. It is not. When the country is convulsed from one end to the other, the moderate leaders, instead of using their undoubted influence with the Government to remove the root causes of the trouble, have framed a ponderous resolution against Non-Co-operation as though they have found out anything new. The long resolution is disgusting reading and the framers of it have evoked nothing but contempt against themselves.

* * *

With the growing democratic spirit in the country, it is only to be expected that voters will take a keen interest in the fortunes of their favourite candidates and will show some opposition to candidates who belong to rival schools of thought. So far as this is done without offending the code of honour of gentlemen, we have nothing to say against it. To some extent the impatience which our young men show against eloquent expositions of political cant is a healthy sign of their political intelligence. Realising all these, we still confess we were not prepared for the unseemly exhibitions against Mr. C. P. Ramasami Aiyer when that gentleman was delivering an electioneering address. Opinions may differ as to whether it was necessary for Mr. Ramasami Aiyer to carry a revolver with him to an electioneering platform because every public man of some note must be aware of the productions of sneaking bravadoes and it is no use taking them seriously. Allowing some margin therefore for the natural provocation which the sight of the revolver must have caused, if the facts as reported be true, we must still strongly condemn such a virulent campaign against Mr. Ramasami Aiyer, not because of his principles, but because he is a Brahmana.

* * *

Two things on which European statesmen and newspapers have wasted words are Ireland and the League of Nations. Debates in Parliament, leading articles in all papers and conferences of Statesmen are going on from day to day but Ireland is as unhappy as ever and the Irish problem is as far from solution as ever it was. Next is the League of Nations which for all practical purposes is impotent. The election of Senator Harding to the Presidential gadi in spite of the fact that his main plank was opposition to the League of Nations is significant and gives an indication of the future trend of American politics. If Senator Harding is against American interference in the case of Ireland, there is little hope of American support if the question of India is placed before that League as some eminent Indian politicians are expecting to do. After all, self-help is the best help.

* *

Thus the *Janmabhumi*. "Yes, any one that knew the exalted and pure soul that lies within and without the white robed Pundit of Prayag knew too that Malavyaji would ere long come over to the side of N. C. O." We have heard of souls within, but what may that thing be which lies 'without' the Punditji ?

* * *

Commenting on the proposed modification of the Congress Creed, the local mouthpiece of the Liberal Leaguers asks "Would it not be proving ungrateful to the British Raj to work for autonomy which eliminates their overlordship or even their coeval existence under the Empire?" The moderates have certainly greater reasons to be grateful to the British Raj than the Nationalists.

THE CONGRESS CREED

We stated very briefly, last week, that the proposed modification of Article I of the Congress Creed is in accord with the spirit of the times and that our rulers themselves were responsible for bringing it about. We shall now attempt to examine the causes which have led the people of India deliberately to suggest a modification which touches the fundamentals of the goal of Indian political activity. The new article runs thus :—

"The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swarajya by the people of India, by all legitimate and peaceful means."

This definition is crisp and clear and does not fetter the people to a particular form or system of Self-Government; why should a nation be thus fettered? It does not say that the British connection is unnecessary, it omits all reference to it. There was a time in the history of India when the leaders of the Congress referred to the British connection as the benevolent dispensation of a merciful Providence. But the times are different, the spirit of the nation is different. Even if British rule were an unmixed blessing, a section of the people does not still want it in preference to self-rule.

The present discontents in India trace their origin to events which occurred long before the enactment of the Rowlatt Act, long before the perpetration of the Amritsar massacre and the Khilafat wrong. These incidents did not form the base, they have been the several tributaries which flooded the stream of discontent. The birth of a virile nationalist movement in India, 15 years ago, which dismissed with great scorn the mendicant policy pursued by the then leaders of the Congress, was a challenge thrown by the young intellectuals of the land to the Government which treated public opinion with contemptuous cynicism. It was a new race of patriots, who had very large adherents, who had the courage of their conviction openly to proclaim the new gospel that the welfare of India was being mercilessly subordinated to the interest of England and that nothing short of Indian independence would satisfy them. Nor were the results of British rule such as to mitigate the effect of this intense propaganda. The high rate of mortality, the horrible poverty, the appalling illiteracy and the loss of manly vigour among Indians—were stern facts which no amount of camouflage can conceal. It is no comfort to be told, in answer to these wrongs, that the heart of the British democracy is sound or that many Britishers in India work hard, honestly and faithfully, in the silence of the judicial chambers or in the groves of the academy. It is this new party which always gives its strength to all progressive movements in this country. It was behind Mrs. Besant when that capable lady organised her Home Rule movement a few years ago. It was behind Mr. Tilak when he displaced Mrs. Besant as the leader of Nationalist India. It is now behind Mr. Gandhi. Repression can only restrain its members for a temporary period but the moment they see a strong leader at the helm, they all join together under his standard. It is the failure to recognise the existence of such a party or having recognised it, to refuse to remove the root cause of the sufferings of which it complains that is responsible for so much bitterness between the Government and the people. A substantial measure of Reform coupled with the repeal of the Press Act, the Arms Act and the Rowlatt Act and the breaking of barriers which divide Indians from Englishmen would have done much to allay the discontent a year ago. But now the situation is entirely changed.

The Punjab tragedy was an awful revelation to the Indian people of the general mentality of our rulers. The report of the Hunter Committee, the vote of the House of Lords approving of human butchery and the strange persistence of the Governments both in India and in England in refusing to take proper action against Michael O'Dwyer and Dyer and all that loathsome gang removed the last lingering faith of the people in the rulers. The supercilious attitude assumed by Europeans towards Indians of all grades adds to the poignancy of the situation. Indians would not be human beings if they do not manfully and fearlessly show their resentment at these acts. The dismemberment of the Turkish Empire was the final act in this tragic drama and though it is not the direct act of the British Government, it is one which has been sanctioned with their consent. It was enough to set Muslim India aflame. We see now on the one hand an unrepentent Government sitting in grave silence in face of the storm that is brewing in the country and on the other, a sorely wounded and highly sensitive race attempting to batter the bureaucratic walls with the weapon of Non-Co-operation. This is not a situation which has been deliberately brought about by the people but a series of official acts have culminated in that.

We might say frankly that if we were asked to choose between Home Rule within the Empire and Indian independence we would certainly choose the former provided we are placed on a level of perfect equality with the other parts of the British Empire. We are free to admit that British rule has conferred upon India important benefits. The study of the English literature has brought us new life and light and is largely responsible for uniting us more and more closely and in withering away the endless jealousies and rivalries of caste and custom. But these benefits have been too dearly purchased. What do all these things matter if the soul is not kept free? If we have given our support to the proposed modification of the Congress Creed, it is because we feel that there is no other course to take consistent with our honor and dignity and in face of the insults flaunted in our face by the bureaucracy. Why should Indians desire to remain within the Empire when that Empire denies them liberty and equality? This is the spirit of the times and the proposed modification of the Congress Creed is in perfcet accord with that spirit.

THE ORIGIN OF THE MALAYALAM LANGUAGE

BY DEWAN BAHADUR A. GOVINDA PILLAI, B.A., B.L.

The appearance, with unimportant modifications, of the same words in Tamil, Malayalam, Karnata, Thulu and Telugu, to signify the various limbs of the body (such as hand, feet, head, finger, heart, etc.,) and the various objects of nature (such as tree, house, sky, pit, honey, etc.) has led to the inference that these languages belong to the same stock, *viz.*, Dravidian.

As however, the affixes used to denote gender, number, tense and case in Tamil, Karnata, Thulu and Telugu, differ from each other, it may be inferred that these four languages are different branches of the said stock. The question then arises whether Malayalam is also a similar branch, or only an offshoot from one of the branches? On an examination of (1) the nature of the above affixes used in Malayalam, (2) the circumstances of time and place under which the language came into existence, and (3) the corrupted forms in which many Tamil words appear in Malayalam, it may be inferred that Malayalam is not an independent branch of the Dravidian stock, but only an offshoot of one of the branches (Tamil).

(1) The affixes used to denote, gender, number, tense and case. The affixes found in Tamil to denote these, do not appear in Thulu, Karnata, and Telugu. The agglutination of gender forms to the tenses of verbs which is found in Tamil (*e. g.*, chaithan, (he did); chaithal (she did); chaivol (she will do) is not found in Thulu, Telugu, and Karnata. This fact, contrasted with the appearance of these affixes and gender forms in Malayalam, is strong evidence of the linguistic severance of these languages from Tamil and Malayalam's linguistic affinity to the same.

It is the grammatical forms of a language (*i. e.*, the affixes above alluded to) that preserve its individuality.

It is by the addition of these forms that foreign words are naturalised in the language, *e. g.*, to naturalise the Sanskrit roots gam (to go) and chal (to move) in Malayalam, we have to affix "nnu", "chchu," or "kkum" and say gamikkuu (goes) gamichchu (went) and gamikkum (will go). These tense affixes are all Tamil. On the other hand where we find words used in Malayalam poetry with Sanskrit case endings such as Bhuvi (in the earth), nrinam (to men), these words are treated as foreigners, and the locative and genitive terminations of Sanskrit are never adopted in inflecting pure Malayalam words, the inflectional terminations of which are always Tamil.

(2) The circumstances of time and place under which Malayalam came into existence. There are good grounds for supposing that at the beginning of the Christian era, Tamil was the prevailing language of Kerala. In the Tamil work Chelappadhikaram of the second century A. D. (*see* Lakshmana Pillay's Essay's appendix XXXIV,) Keralam is described as a part of Tamilakam (the Tamil country). In the deed of gift to Jews and Christians, (of the 9th century A. D.) made by Cherainan Perumal, brother of Elankoviladi, (the author of Chelappadhikaram) one of the attesting witnesses in the King of Venad (*See* Logam's Malabar Manual) in which the prevailing language is said to have been Kodamthamul in old Tamil grammars. This Venad is expressly named as a part of Kerala, in the Keralolpatty.

In an inscription of a grant in the Thiroovellam pagoda dated 300 M. E. (about 1100 A. D.) during the reign of a King of Venad, the whole phraseology, is pure Tamil with the exception of a few words here and there in which the hard consonants have been naturalized (*e. g.*, namaskarathirku is changed into namaskarathirnoo and konduvanthan into konduvannoo) (*see* Indian Antiquity, vol. 24, pp. 255 and 278).

In a Malayalam work of about the same date, (Ramacharitam) the gradual introduction of similar naturalized form is discernible, the phraseology in other respects being pure Tamil. In this work we find

Runoo for enru (so) in Tamil
Chuva for chuvai (*taste*)—
Thalaruavar for Thalaruthava (*were tired*)
Wekularnu for Ulekalarnthithu (*hearts were limited*)
Pekkananyal for Pekkanankal (*crowds of evil spirits*)
Ananangalkur for Ananagmkalku (*to the faces*).

(3) Adoption of corrupted forms of Tamil words. This occurs by phonetic decay, in the way pointed out in the last para. This process is discernible even at the present day in the naturalization of such forms as "keennu" for kizhugoo (descended) Atheennu for Athil-minno (from that). It is by this process that Malayalam has got chellum from chelvam (prosperity) and chengulam from chenkalam (a gong). It is the same process of phonetic decay and rise of dialects that has produced the modern Romance languages of France and Spain from the Latin language of the Romans who conquered and occupied those countries. Such corruption is due to the peculiar structure of the vocal organs of the speakers, which makes them naturally, to prefer certain sounds to others. The corrupted forms are first adopted by men of acknowledged authority and then spread among the community of which they are the leaders. It is in this way that Atheennoo and Athinkennu for Athilminno (from that) having been adopted by Thinjathoo Eloothatchan, have now secured their places in Malayalam literature.

If the people among whom this process is in operation, happen to be separated from their original stock, by the intervention of mountain ranges or seas, the divergence becomes the more accentuated and when enriched by new associations, their language reaches a stage, whence it even looks upon the old stock as a stranger, whose wares are not fit for adoption into the new life that it has learnt to lead.

The long separation of Keraleeans from the original Dravidian stock, accentuated by the intervening Western ghats, coupled with their familiarity with Sanskrit, so abundantly encouraged by such leading authors as Eloothatchan, has made Sanskrit the sole repository for the enrichment of Malayalam to the total exclusion of fresh Tamil words. So much so, that at the present day, a laborious philological investigation has become necessary to ascertain the origin of the language. Nevertheless, the data above set forth, do, it is believed, lead to the conclusion that Malayalam arose as an offshoot from the Tamil branch of the Dravidian stock by a process of phonetic decay and dialectic regeneration.

STUDIES IN TAMIL LITERATURE, II.

By Mr. T. N. SESHACHALAM AIYER, B.A., B.L.

In the chapter on 'The River,' an endeavour has been made to show how Kambau systematizes a theme, which other poets handle in a more or less, desultory manner. The same authors, however, when they proceed to speak of the country, they take us, step by step, through a series of events in a regular order. They all narrate faithfully the successive stages of cultivation interspersing it with good, bad indifferent sort of figures and figurative imageries, but the method is stereotyped Their treatment of the subject, in bare outline, would involve the ryots celebrating the inception of the floods with drinking bouts—their singing for joy—their going to the fields and yoking the cattle—ploughing the soil—the sowing, sprouting and transplantation—the weeding—the crops putting forth ears of corn—the ears standing stiff and bending low before and after the setting in of grain—the reaping, sheafing, threshing and the slacking of the paddy—the carting of the produce home, where the ryots pay the revenue, share it with the poor and entertain their guests and relations in sumptuous feast and mirth. Kamban sets about the matter in quite a different manner. He along with all the poets emphasises the profuse hospitality as the key note of the country. But there is an important divergence between Kamban on the one hand and the rest on the other in their respective appreciation of *cause and effect*. The impression that is left in us after reading the *country* in other works, would be that the people are hospitable because they have so much to give. Kamban would have us conceive that really the characteristic hospitality of the people is the cause of the plenteous prosperity Hospitality is service to humanity, and if Kamban reiterates one idea more than another, it is this, *viz*, '*SERVICE*' is the highest good in itself and the cause of all that is good besides. This sublime truth is deduced by a process that is very subtle. Aggressive didactism could not, by any means, be laid to Kamban's charge. The artist, in his consummate skill, induces this impression in us by the exercise of selection. There is no mention of any incident or event in his version, that would indicate the least form of violence or effort. Whatever that people get is Nature's free, and spontaneous gift and the country needs no *tapping*. Therefore all the stages of cultivation, are dispensed with or, at best, disposed of with a remote suggestion. Kamban's pictures of the country are essentially static. He tells us rather how Nature and people are, and not so much how they came that to be. Kosala, like a cornucopia showers peace, plenty and prosperity on her children. There it is, the people have only to collect and not to make. "The peasants", says Kamban in a stanza "*the peasants collect what were in the fields, in the groves, on the trees and in the mines, like the bees gathering honey from the flowers.*" If the peasants were industrious, it was only the industry of the bee;—gathering only what is sweet, gathering what they have not produced and gathering primarily for the benefit of the commonweath. The whole Nature is calm; society is characterised by the existence of uninterrupted peace. The turmoil that rolls people from change to change which Mathew Arnold deplores, or the incessant toil which the Lotos Eaters protest, have no place in Kamban's Kosala. It is not flying the neighbour's contact as the Scholar Gipsy was exhorted to do, nor again the dreamy indolence that the Lotos Eaters coveted, but active service to humanity, Kamban tell us is the royal road to eternal beatitude.

One that runs may not read this in the *padalam*, nor could it be maintained that so much is being read into it. The explanation for the divergence lies in this: our poet Kamban is a seer himself and his treatment of Kosala appears to be a splendid commentary on the recondite words of another great seer Thiruvalluvar. Kural has a chapter wherein is described what an ideal country ought to be. Kamban a close student of Kural, takes couplet after couplet, and adopts it to his theme so far as it would suit his conception of it. A detailed examination of this kind would be beyond the scope of these studies but one couplet among them would be in point to our immediate purpose. That couplet declares that a country, which yields its produce only in recompense to the labour bestowed on it, is not worth its name; while in a true country its bounties reach the people in effortless spontaneity. It is in accordance with this dictum that Kamban cuts his own path in describing his country and drops altogether all the stages from the ploughing to the reaping. Thiruvalluvar again lays down in his chapter on 'Entertaining guests', that his land, who eats of what is left after feasting his guests, would yield its produce by itself—even merely to sow is superfluous. Hospitality then, which is only a popular expression for abstract service, is the cause, the effect being abundance of wealth. In the light of these two of Valluvar's couplets it would be intelligible why Kamban keeps our attention constantly invited sometimes even repeating almost to a fault, either to the material prosperity of the country or the hearty hospitality of her people and omits a description of the conventional stages of cultivation which the poets, before and after, have made so much of. Strenuosity in any direction would be repugnant to the conception of a country's spontaneous prosperity on the basis of its 'Service.'

The vision of our poet goes even farther than that of his inspirer. Thiruvalluvar has said that Service is the granary for universal peace and prosperity. Kamban tells us what was the key that was in Kosala which had opened it; that lay with the mistress of the house.

> "As all the broad-eyed, crescent-browed women
> were endowed with learning and riches,
> what else was there to do than to help the
> needy supplicants to extend
> welcome entertainment to guests, day after day."

Service is possible in Kosala because the women are all cultured and rich. Without the co-operation of women, Kamban knew, ancient India had realised men could scarcely be able to do any good, and women unless imbued with deep learning would not easily appreciate the concept of self-less service as the mission on the earth. The women being rich is also given as a companion reason for, a will without the means

would be futile. The ultimate cause of the country's prosperity lies therefore in the learning of the women, as we had shown before that their chastity was the occasion for the seasonal rains. From practical point of view the universal learning of women was the main stay for the blessedness of Kosala.

Kamban opens this *padalam* with a handsome tribute to his source, Valmiki. Like all great souls the poet acknowledges a debt where it is due, and like all great minds again he improves upon the material he borrows :—

> Valmiki, the inimitable composer of the four feet
> measure, had of yore, with his numbers sweet,
> feasted the ear of gods ; while I, drunk with
> desire, begin to speak of a land, that had
> been commemorated by him—even like the
> essays that the dumb would make at talking.

Strictly this homage bespeaks more modesty than truth. Valmiki mentions Kosala merely as a country where the city of Ayodhia was, and his fifth and sixth *sargams* treat only of the metropolis. There is no room to extenuate the discrepancy as a case of oversight, for in his next 'padalam' devoted to the city, Kamban quotes again in the first stanza, Valmiki's praising it, among its proudest attributes. If Kamban had, on the other hand, expressed his diffidence as describing a land that had not been attempted even by Valmiki, it would have been truer, none the less effective for the intended panegyric, while at the same time the magnitude of the task is appreciably enhanced.

Marutham or the land of the agriculturalists, receive largest attention in the hands of the poet. That is personified as a queen with all her paraphernalia :—

> With the dance of peacocks in humid groves ;
> lotus stalks holding the flame of their bloom
> clouds rattling like kettle—drums ; staring
> violets for the spectators ; crystal waves
> for the curtain cloth, and with the music of
> the droning bees, Maiden Marutham sits
> in state.

We are told of the fabulous exuberance of things at the very outset :—

> The ridges abound in pearls ; the sluices in chanks ;
> the dams in veins of gold; the ditches where buffaloes
> wallow in wildernes of violets ; the embankments
> in coral ; paddy-field in swans ; jungles adjacent
> in fresh honey, the beautiful sholas in bees
> buzzying and gay.

As regards the sounds that prevail in the land, they are not the plaintive cries of the miserable or the vehement protests of the oppressed ; but says Kamban :—

> The dash of the rushing river, the creach of the
> sugar press; the rythm of the juice's flow ;
> the frothing noise at the chank's mouth
> in the sea-shore ; the din of fighting bulls ;
> the spleash of the buffaloes plunging into
> water ; these everywhere and in confusion
> prevail.

Added to these, the whole country is immersed in soft music. The pipe or the labour, the lute or the harp was in evidence in all the houses, be it the toddy-drawers' or the peasants'.

> The small-harped minstrels, having drunk,
> sing here and there to the harmony of the
> leather-thonged drums, awaking the
> maidens of peacocks grace and spotless
> eyes, who within silver palaces on
> golden couches, slumber.

That is not all. Those natural sounds or these musical notes would be in particular places but there was a buzzle that obtained every where—the boisterous hilarity of hospitable homes.

The whole country is enveloped in an atmosphere of rest and repose :—

> The bees and *Laxmi* rest in lotus flowers ;
> the harlot's eyes and Cupid's shafts on the
> cool-garlanded lascivious ; sea's coral
> and pearls bright in the great clouds ;
> truth and learning rest in tongues. (not merely in books).

Then again :—

> The conches repose in water ; the buffaloes in
> shade ; bees repose among the garlands ;
> *Laxmi* reposes in the lotus ; the turtle near
> the roots, and the oysters in fords and
> ferries repose ; the swans repose in the
> corn-stack and the pea-cocks in the grove.

Things that are in a state of wakefulness are however, not wanting in Kosala :—

> The golden ore turned over as the harrow ploughs ;
> the pearls which the conches yean ; the blazing
> gems on the ridges ; the paddy, the green clustered
> sugar-cane, the beetle, the maiden's faces
> and the lotus-bloom shine gazing on.

A current of sweetness is infused into the peace and plenty, the harmony and repose all over the land :—

> The honeys collecting from the sugar-cane,
> from the spatha of the palm, from the
> fruits in the grove, from the dripping hives,
> and the sprinkling blossoms, flow in
> boundless torrents and reaching the sea,
> where vessels float, feed the fond fishes
> to satiety.

In a few stanzas spread out in the *padalam*, Kamban tells us how the people employed themselves :—

Some men celebrate their wedding with the maidens of their heart ; some merge themselves in music,—the science and sense of which accompany each other like the kite and its shadow ; some devour with their ears the disquisitions of the learned ; here they with exultation receive their guests for a feasting festival ; there are people distributing alms to the deserving. In fragrant gardens the damsels are diverting themselves with playing at balls and the youthful swains are watching them with glee. The mothers are feeding their tender babies at their breast. Men are cheering at the cock-fights and bull-fights. Some there are who are employed in commerce, thus augmenting the treasure of the King.

These and such are the innocent pastimes and the laudable occupations of the Nation. It is remarkable that Kamban enumerates only the temporal activities of the people, and that there is no reference to politics among them is very much to his credit. But what is surprising is that in Kosala nobody seems to be engaged in temple festivities or in performing the obsequies to the departed spirits of the ancestors, and that even in the face of Thiruvalluvar's having laid down worship of God and worship of the ancestors to be the primary duties of an honest householder. The reason is difficult to guess. Perhaps, Kamban would acknowledge as the

highest form of religion only Service to Humanity, and his Utopia is shaped accordingly.

Not alone in man but in the animal world too, there is the same element of cheerful ease of existence. A typical episode from Nature is figured in a stanza where it is said that in the fields.

> The red-webbed swans, having craddled their fledglings
> in the glorious lotus, stray away practising the
> carp-eyed maidens' gait; The young swans are fed with the
> milk which the buffaloes, on the thought of their calves
> at home, shed; and the green frogs
> sing them, with their lullaby, to sleep.

In another stanza we are amused with the innocence of a sparrow which mistaking for glow-worms, carry fondly away to illumine its nest the gems that turn over as a cock scratched the earth for prey.

A scene from rustic romance is reproduced by Kamban, which is as instructive as it is amusing:—

> There being no weeds but in appearance suggested
> one or the other of the eyes, palm, feet, face or the
> lips of their sweet-hearts, the toddy-mouthed
> peasants lingered on unable to pluck them up.
> Would the commonfolk ever violate the love
> they on maidens bestow!

The toddy-mouthed peasants are represented as setting out to weed the fields, but on realising those weeds (violets and lotus) to be the counterparts of one or other of the features of their sweet hearts, they hesitate and abandon the weeding altogether. Some digression may not be out of place in connection with this magnificent representation of pastoral love. An attempt had been made in the last paper to show on two separate occasions what difference in effect it produced when Kamban borrowed an idea from others and when others borrowed an idea from him. Here is an instance which at once would be illustrative of both. Kamban evidently appropriates a picture which appeared in "JEEVAKA CHINTHAMANI." There Thiruthakkadevar would make his peasant stay singing, without weeding, for they were unable to pluck the lotus or the violet for the one suggested the face and the other the eyes, of their sweet hearts, and concludes with an observation that "such is the nature of the agricultural peasants." That Kamban has added some more features that appeal to the peasants is not surely much of an improvement, though he elucidates the eliptical explanation which the Chinthamani gives to the conduct of the peasants. Such is the nature of peasants, leaves Thirukkadevar. Kamban's querry however, 'if the common-folk would ever violate love,' can generate a suspicion that the gentle-folk might. Probably that is so; but we can take it that, at any rate, the cultured gentry may not revere symbols wherever they adore the object, while supersitition is a settled factor in rustic life. The peasants are superstitious even in love. The fetichistic instinct in them revolts if only a symbol, metaphorical at that, of their love is to be molested. Kamban's superiority however over his original as well as over his followers rests in his consistent maintenance of this peasant character throughout. Hundreds of stanzas later in *Mittulaikatshi Padalam* and still later in *Gangai Padalam* when weeding is to be done, Kamban makes only the peasant girls do it; while in CHINTHAMANI, we find five stanzas after, the peasants, who were reported to have desisted from weeding on sentimental grounds, cutting and mowing away the same violets and lotuses with their stalwart arms when they reap the crops. Paranjothi Munivar, who followed Kamban, makes his peasants quarrel with the weedy violets and lotuses for rivalling their mistresses' features, and they pluck and throw them away with meditated vengeance. This version of the incident loses sight of the essence of pastoral love. Jealousy is the homage that coquetry renders to real love. True love is all embracing and above rivalry or jealousy. In HARISCHANDRA PURANAM the maidens go out to weed but they could not tamper with the violets or the lotuses because they mirror so much their own eyes and faces. This amount of self-adoration in girls is amusing and certainly in keeping with their innocent nature. But there is a sort of bathos in this when we know that the author had, just a few stanzas before, said in a rather aggressive manner that the men had trampled down and crushed the blossoms under the harrow when they ploughed. In those poets, therefore one end of their romance [illegible] the other. When we applied the test of logical sequel to their similies we found them wanting. They do not fare better when their incidents are put to test under consistency to pros and cons.

Kamban has prepared the ground for the Incarnation of Shri Vishnu. It is a land, then, whose prosperity is as permanent as it is exuberant that would see no destruction even at the doomsday deluge; a land where the 'song of the shirt' is not wept, nor the 'cry of children' heard; but whose deified altar is Humanity.

[The first article in this series appeared in the issue of October, 10.]

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